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AN AFROCENTRIC LEADERSHIP TRAINING MODEL FOR A NEW CHURCH START

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BY
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ABSTRACT

"An Afrocentric Leadership

Training Model for A New Church Start"

by

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This final document addresses the need of training African American church leaders in a new church development. Twelve sessions of structural expressions were developed and implemented with the members of a new church start to enhance their leadership qualities through an Afrocentric curriculum. The learning experiences were framed by biblical and theological, historical studies, and the principles of Nguzo Saba from an Afrocentric perspective. Results of the model were evaluated by qualitative analysis instruments, and show that the members gained more knowledge of Afrocentric leadership.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This model of ministry is about training African-American church leaders in a new church development to use the resources of African and African Americans culture to meet the needs of the African American community today. It is about viewing leadership training from an Afrocentric perspective on Scripture, spirit, culture, and humanity. Most importantly, in an effort to train African American church leaders for unity, self-determination, and faith, this model of ministry endeavors to validate Afrocentric leadership training by placing it along side of training models of other cultures whose respective views on Christian leadership have long dominated theological education.

By lifting up both African people of the Bible and early African American church leaders as role models, this model of ministry calls for greater inclusion of this emphasis in African American churches. Throughout the history of African people, spirituality has always played an important role. It is important to note that this model of ministry maintains a distinction between that which is African American and that which is Afrocentric. African American is a term that identifies the racial and geographic dimensions of both personal and group identification. Afrocentric, however, implies a distinct level of cultural awareness. It is a pro-African term which encourages African

Americans to view the world and reality from a perspective grounded in African culture and religion.[1]

It is essential for African American leaders to stress not only the racial dimensions of their congregation, but also the rich traditions of their people in an Afrocentric Christian curriculum. In order to institute such cultural awareness in African American churches, this model of ministry develops an Afrocentric model of ministry that attempts to identify and train prospective church leaders. To this end, this model of ministry investigates the plausibility and accuracy of the following three hypotheses, each of which is related to the leadership training of members of a new church development project in the African-American community.

The first hypothesis is the belief that there are gifts, graces, and qualities for leadership in newly developed African American churches that have yet to be discovered. The second hypothesis is the belief that African American churches seldom base their development on a purely Afrocentric curriculum, and therefore fail to accommodate the goals of establishing congregations grounded in an Afrocentric perspective. The third hypothesis maintains the belief that a series of Afrocentric workshops and other learning opportunities can introduce congregations to biblical and theological studies from an Afrocentric perspective. This exposure, in turn, can create leaders who will confidently guide the development of a contemporary Afrocentric, Christian congregation.

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[1]Molefi Kete Asante, Afrocentricity. (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc. 1988). VIII.

In addition to exploring the above hypotheses, this model of ministry examines their application within the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church of Columbus, Ohio. On February 7, 1993, the Adoration and Peace Baptist Church was faced with the need of training and developing leaders for a newly organized African American church fellowship. Unlike the start of most African American Baptist churches, the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church was not started as a church split or as the result of a disgruntled group leaving an established church. Rather, this church was based on the need for an African American church to minister to this community. The new fellowship was made of mostly family members and a few friends of the pastor. This new work was started on the far east side of Columbus, Ohio an area into which African Americans were moving. This new African American Baptist fellowship was started based on the following two observations.

1. This was a culturally changing community.
2. There was no existing African American Baptist church in the community.

There was a need of leadership training material for a newly organized African American church start. After reviewing training materials available through the National Baptist Sunday School and Training Board, the Progressive Baptist Sunday School and Training Union, public libraries, United Theological Seminary Library, the Ohio State University Library, and several Christian book stores, it became evident that there was no culturally-specific leadership training material available to aid in an African American church start. Several of the current publications on developing new church work were not culturally specific and only devoted a chapter to leadership qualities and the selection of

officers. These works were neither thorough enough nor sufficient for the purpose of training new leaders. While the United Methodist Church's manual entitled "Looking at Leadership Through the Eyes of Biblical Faith," for example, does a good job of helping church leaders and teachers evaluate their effectiveness in Christian education, it does not address the particular needs of African Americans. As it suggests, "teachers working ...in certain cultural or ethnic settings are encouraged to adapt and reword questions or issues for their situations"[2] This manual, then, leaves a great deal unsaid about how to guide the contemporary African American congregation. This model of ministry calls for a model which suggests these particular "adaptations."

As duly noted by Sid Smith, churches have been planted in the African American community on the basis of four methods:

> The first method is the pastor-family method which occurred when the pastor felt moved to take his family and start a new church. The second method is the bible study model. A new church, in this case, is started as a result of a home bible study. The third method is a mission model. This is the classical Southern Baptist model where a church starts a mission that is designed to minister in a black community. The sponsoring church is the "mother church" and nurtures the new church until it is strong enough to become weaned and make it on its own. The fourth method... is the church split model.[3]

The above models have long served the African American community. What they have failed to do, however, is propose a method of training church leaders who emerge from and minister to the community.

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[2]Looking at Leadership Through the Eyes of Biblical Faith(Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1978) 3.

[3]Sid Smith, Church Planting in the Black Community, (Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1989) 14.

New church leadership from the African American Perspective

What is the core of leadership?

The core of church leadership can come as the result of the pastor's vision. Basically, he or she is responsible for creating a real desire among the congregation to initiate church planting in the African American community. Another model involves the personal leadership of an individual who also responds to a vision. In this case, the individual goes out and starts the church him/herself. Finally, new church development also comes as a result of denominational initiation. Church staff is hired by the denomination to begin church planting in the community.

Church planting for the late twentieth century in the African American community requires insightful and strategic planning much like the planning and development of a new business conglomerate in the corporate world. An entrepreneurial method in which an individual minister starts a new church, much like one might start a small independent business, will no longer suffice. Collective efforts must replace individual efforts if the brotherhood of the Christian faith and the African American community is to prevail. The church planting of today, specifically in the African American community, requires leadership that is spiritually visionary, planning oriented, motivational, and skilled in utilizing market media. This leadership must be able to create and generate resources necessary for church planting.

This model of ministry, then, provides a discussion of the construction and implementation of a training model which was used at the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church from July 10 to August 2, 1994. Chapter II describes the

context of the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church's ministry; defining its location, demographics, social economic composition, and the people of its fellowship. Next, the theological foundation for this model of ministry is presented in Chapter III, along with a discussion of the historical presence of Africans in the Bible, a fact that has traditionally been overlooked. Chapter IV moves on to present an actual Afrocentric based leadership training model for a new church start. Outlining events, presentations and resources, this chapter describes in detail the conception, design, and implementation of the model as carried out by the Adoration and Peace Baptist Church. Chapter V then summarizes this model and presents the author's evaluation of what was gained in this process based on the collected data. Finally, Chapter VI offers a frank discussion regarding the author's reflections on the effectiveness and replicability of this model, suggesting ways of making the model more effective.

Chapter II

CONTEXT OF MINISTRY

The context of my ministry at Adoration and Peace Church on the far east side of Columbus, Ohio. This area is called the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Planning Area. The 1990 census shows this area to be a racially changing community. The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church was organized to provide an African American Baptist church in this area known as the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Planning Area. Columbus is the largest city in Ohio and is centrally located. The total area population as recorded in the l990 census is 1,345,000 and the African American population is 142,748 which is 12.1% of the total population. The African American community is spread throughout the city. Several areas are predominantly African American; Southfield, the south end, north, Linden, and the east side. Black churches are located in each of the previously mentioned areas and downtown. There is no Black baptist churches on the far east side of Columbus.

The Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Planning Area is located on Columbus, Ohio's east side, extending from Alum Creek Drive to Interstate I-70 to I-270, including the municipalities of Bexley and Whitehall. Both of these municipalities are incorporated villages which are surrounded by the incorporated city limit of Columbus. These two municipalities are adjacent to the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Planning Area. The 1990 census data shows each area to be predominantly white, 20% Jewish, 80% upper- and middle-class, and 60% having an income of $30-$100 thousand annually.

The planning area is almost entirely developed and is considered to be a stable, predominately residential community. At one time, the planning area was part of Truo and Marion Townships, but these were quickly assimilated by the incorporated municipalities as the area changed from rural to urban uses. The only significant topographical features of the area are Alum Creek and Big Walnut Creek.

Development in the 1960s and early 1970s focused on "filling in" the space resulting from the initial residential-subdivision process. Apartment-type developments replaced single-family homes as the chief form of residential development and the existing commercial land uses along the major thoroughfare continued to expand. The opening of the I-70 freeway made it possible for residents to travel to other parts of the Columbus area quickly and with relative ease. Middle-income residential neighborhoods were established east of Alum Creek in the late 1960s. The I-270 outerbelt which forms the planning area's eastern boundary made convenient intra-regional auto travel a reality.

This area continued to grow at a steady rate from the 70s to 90s both commercially and residentially. There are four shopping centers located in this territory of the city. Each of these centers contain a major grocery store and seven to ten other shops and small businesses. The Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge area's total population is 24,944 people.[4]

The Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Information Profile, Community Planning Area 20 reveals that ten percent of this area's new growth population is comprised of single, female-head-of-household families. The present churches in the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge

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[4] City of Columbus, Development Department of Planning Division.

area are not reaching this area's new population. A recent survey administered by the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church of existing churches in this area showed that there are six churches in the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge Planning Area i.e., United Methodist Church, Apostolic Church, Southeast Christian Church, Lutheran Church, Southern Baptist Church, and the Scottwood Congregational Church. Less than 1% of each of their individual membership is comprised of the African American persuasion. With the increasing rise in the African American population, there is a need for an African American church. This will enable the African American population of this area to be a part of a congregation adjacent to or within their respective neighborhoods without having to travel across the city to attend a church that is culturally specific and capable of providing Afrocentric leadership training for its members.

The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church held its first worship service on February 7, 1993 at the Johnson Parks Middle School. This school is located near the center of the Eastmoor/Walnut Ridge area. During this first service, 17 people joined the new fellowship and three people joined as candidates for baptism. By the end of the first month, the church membership totaled 39 (22 adults and 17 were youth and children). The membership of Adoration and Peace is a relatively young aged congregation consisting of married couples and single parents ranging in age from 19 to 55 years old.

All of the new members were formerly members of other Baptist churches. None of them had ever held any office or leadership position. This raised the immediate need for church leadership training. It has been previously stated in Chapter I that, while material on church leadership training is available for established churches, most are

written by representatives of and reflect the theological, Biblical and historical views of the dominant culture. Henry H. Mitchell expounds on the importance of culture as it related in his book Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art: "Thus, Black Christianity [he writes] does in fact have more of its own beliefs than is generally recognized. These beliefs simply have not been committed to writing by the Black church. In fact, only in the past twenty years have we become aware that we have any ideas or serious interpretations worth preserving."[5]

This researcher lifts up Dr. Mitchell's thoughts here for two reasons: What he calls Black Christianity is so identified because Blacks have always been in charge of their own church development and Bible interpretation. The second reason is to underscore his argument that the Black culture has molded the Black church. If Mitchell's position is true, then the leader of the African American church would be affected by its culture. Hopkin's , teacher at Santa Clare University, view coincide with that of Mitchell. "He believes that out of the struggles of life, African American poor rely on Black theology which has provided aid to those preceding them."[6]

This philosophy has been handed down from generation to generation. While in the past Black people clung to a particularly *Black* tradition, today's generation has an even more urgent need to pay attention to those who came before them. There is now a more obvious need for an Afrocentric based leadership training model for a new church

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[5]Henry H. Mitchell, Black Preaching (Nashville Abingdon Press,1990, 17).

[6]Dwight N. Hopkins, Black Theology: A Documentary History. Volume II, Black Theology and a Second Generation: New Scholarship and New Challenges. ed. James H. Cone and Gayraud Wilmore (New York: Maryknoll), 63.

start which will not have the history of the oral tradition to be passed from one generation to the next.

Chapter III

THE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR AN AFROCENTRIC BASED LEADERSHIP TRAINING MODEL FOR A NEW CHURCH START

To address the theological foundation for this model, it is necessary to examine the idea of God being on the side of the oppressed, the premise of a Biblical perspective.

God on the Side of the Oppressed:

As Dwight Hopkins argues in Shoes that Fit Our Feet, the theology of the slaves in North America was based upon the religious experience that the African slaves brought with them on the slave ships from the west coast of Africa. The African slave theology was based upon the following beliefs. They believed the god they worshipped to be the most high God. It was their belief that God was the ultimate of divinity. To the African slave, God was all knowing of the past, present, and future of life.

Hopkins also stress the fact that the God of African indigenous religions is one who "cares" pities, is "kind", and is essentially "the main hope of the poor in society." In addition, this same God serves as "judge", one who "metes out justice, punishment, and

retribution" with "partiality to the victim." Ultimately, "God sides with the political powerlessness of society's injured."[7]

This can also be related to the political powerlessness of the African American community today. African Americans still uphold Black theological thought which embraces the self importance, collectiveness and unity within the community. This balances the relationship between self, others, and God.

These theological ideals may be considered to be an early form of Black theology. During the time of enslavement, this hope and past remembrance brought them through difficult times. This, as Olin P. Moyd states, is the basis for a Black theology:

> *Black Theology* – the Black community's attempt to reflect upon the historical relationship – events – between God and themselves. It is the Black community's attempt to describe those events in the clearest and most coherent language at its disposal. Black theology is the Black community's attempt to articulate its understanding of 'what in the world God was doing' or 'what God was doing in the world' while Blacks were undergoing slavery, Jim Crowism, second-class citizenship, the struggle for 'integration,' and the strides for Black Power, Black identity, and social justice. Black theology seeks to explicate the Black community's understanding of God's promise and the goal toward which he is directing the world while Black people in America are and were going through dehumanizing experiences.[8]

The theology which undergirds this model of Afrocentric leadership training comes from a Black theological perspective. James Cone is one of the leading writers of the Black theological perspective. Cone contends that Black theology came to light in the

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[7] Dwight N. Hopkins, Shoes That Fit Our Feet (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993), 16

[8] Olin P. Moyd, Redemption in Black Theology (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1979), 23

1960s as a result of the Black church's participation in the struggle for freedom and equality for Blacks. Cone contends that the search of our past for insight that became the basis for Black theology.

> Instead of turning to Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett for ethical guidance in those troubled times, we searched our past for insight, strength and the courage to speak and do the truth in an extreme situation of oppression. The names of Richard Allen and James Varick, Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, Henry McNeal Turner and Martin Luther King, Jr., become household names as we attempted to create new theological categories that would express our historical fight for justice.[9]

To Cone, it is faith in God in light of historical experience of the struggle for justice. His work recognizes the tension between the Black church and the other Black groups involved in the struggle for social justice. Cone expresses that we cannot accept the dominant theology which separates love from justice and religion from politics.[10] Cone continues by saying:

> But I contend that the faith of the Black church lays a claim upon all church people that transcends the social mores of a given profession. Therefore, to cover-up and to minimize the sins of the church is to guarantee its destruction as a community of faith, committed to the liberation of the oppressed. If we want the Black church to live beyond our brief histories and thus to serve as the "Old Ship of Zion" that will carry the people home to freedom, then we had better examine the direction in which the ship is going. Who is the Captain of the Ship, and what are his economic and political interests? This question should not only be applied to bishops, but to pastors and theologians, deacons and stewards. Unless we are willing to apply the most severe scientific analysis to our church communities in terms of economics and politics and be willing to confess and repent of our sins in the struggle for liberation, then

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[9] James E. Cone, "Black Theology Perspectives." Theology In The Americas Documentation Series. (New York, NY: The Secretariat of Theology in the Amerias, 1978), 1.

[10] Ibid., p. 5

> the Black church, as we talk about it, will remain a relic of history and nothing more. God will have to raise up new instruments of freedom so that his faithfulness to liberate the poor and weak can be realized in history. We must not forget that God's Spirit will use us as her instrument only insofar as we remain agents of liberation by using our resources for the empowerment of the poor and weak.[11]

This historical Black church view of the Old Ship of Zion theology is inclusive of all people and will accept all who are willing to come.

The Premise of a Biblical Perspective

Theology must be viewed in light of Biblical understanding. At the present time, much is being said in the world of Black academia regarding the ways in which Africans have been excluded from their proper place in the history of the Biblical account. This model of ministry recognizes the necessity of helping leaders to understand the African presence in Biblical writing. An accurate account must be given to geographical location and historical events. It is necessary to recognize the presence of Africans in Biblical writings. We must evaluate the accuracy of the recorded data or the interpretation of the recorded data concerning geographical locations and historical events. Cain Hope Felder, W.R. Robinson, and other Biblical scholars have recently contributed writings that are uplifting to the race. Felder's Troubling Biblical Waters, Class, Race, and Family, and Stony the Road We Trod give evidence to the relevancy of Black's presence in Biblical writing. W.R. Robinson's Roots, Race and Religion which is a three part volume, also deals with the presence of Blacks in scripture. This becomes a very important foundation for the theology that will undergird this model of ministry.

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[11] Ibid., p. 5.

It is important that individuals see themselves in relationship to the Scripture. Furthermore, the Holy Scriptures document God's relationship between God and humankind, depicting this relationship historically. They also reveal the presence of God at work in the lives of individuals. In the Bible, the Word as we are inclined to call it, questions are raised which become pertinent in laying the foundation of theology to undergird this project. How are the authors and characters of Biblical writing and their relationship with God relevant to the individuals involved in this model of ministry? What is meant by teaching the Holy Scriptures from an African American perspective? How does an African American perspective on Biblical interpretation differ from the dominant culture's perspective on teaching the Holy Scriptures?

In his essay Cultural Idealogy, Afrocentrism, and Biblical Interpretation, Felder raises the question of why African Americans fail to see themselves in light of the Holy Scriptures, intimating that somehow the African presence has been dropped from the Word (the Bible). Felder first looks at the geographical location of where the Word was written, where the events of the Word took place. He then argues that those who translated the Word did not believe it necessary to recognize the geographical location as being in Northern Africa. He further contends that countries such as Egypt and Ethiopia have been on maps as if they were not a part of the continent of Africa. As Felder raises this issue, he also advises the reader that it is necessary to deal with the people of these given regions. It then becomes apparent that a distinction of race must be given to those individuals living in these given areas. Careful study of the Scriptures is necessary to determine that these countries, cities, and rivers are all given their respective places

geographically, that we recognize that cities have not changed their locations from Biblical times to the present, or that different names for cities which may have had a name change are recognized.

People of all backgrounds, as well as Biblical scholars, must begin to perceive the contributions of the African people in the Holy Scriptures as important. The Holy Scriptures represent a diversity of cultures which all contribute to the story of humankind's relationship with God. Felder uses as examples the Old Testament characters of Noah, Abraham, Miriam, Moses, the Pharaohs, and the Queen of Sheba. He notes that these individuals are typically thought of as being European or Euro-Asiatic. He also traces the case of Mary and Joseph in the New Testament. He explains how the geographical location where these two individuals lived their lives renders a Euro-centric characterization of them totally inadequate in relation to the historical and geographical location. The question, then, is "How are these two individuals presented today as European in the pictorial characterizations or pictorial imagery that we would see of Mary, of Joseph?"[12] Felder discuss this issue further in the following passage:

> Virtually all of the New Testament personalities are portrayed as typically European. For example, in diverse Ecclesiastical circles Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the beneficiary of reverential address and title, but pictorial representations of her today are invariably the image of a European. This centerpiece of the most modern Christian art is perceived as an accurate image of the original Madonna. Consequently, most of the people believe that the mother of Jesus of Nazareth was a woman who

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[12]Cain Hope Felder, Cultural Ideology, Afrocentrism, and Biblical Interpretation, vol. 2, Black Theology, A Documentary History, ed. by James M. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore. (New York: Maryknoll, 1993), 188.

> resembled the ordinary European of today. Such presumptions are only now beginning to be substantially challenged by Afro-centric modes of Biblical interpretations, as studies devote more attention to the ancient iconography and the importance of Egyptian and Ethiopian civilizations in the shaping of the Biblical world. If the imagery of the mother of Jesus is pictorialized in a European manner, or with European characteristics and pigmentation, this would serve as one way that the presence of Blacks in the Bible have been eradicated. The thought of the mother of Jesus as being an Afro-centric individual or from African descent raises an even greater question, or as great a question as to the origin of Joseph, the earthly father, and of Jesus, who would then have been born of an earthly mother of a dark pigmentation.[13]

Felder raises the issue in relation to where events take place in the Holy Scripture, as aforementioned in this model of ministry. He considers the location of the Garden of Eden, a story found in Genesis 2:8-14:

> The Bible provides extensive evidence that the earliest of its people must be located in Africa. The Garden of Eden story found in Genesis 2:8-14 indicates that the first two rivers of Eden are closely associated with ancient Cush, the Hebrew's term that the Greeks would later transpose as "Aithiops" or Ethiopia, meaning literally, "burnt faced people." The Pishon and the Gihon rivers are mentioned in this story. Biblical scholars usually date this composite as Jahwist [J] tradition in the 10th century BC, suggesting that at the time these were early references to the African river system known today as the Blue and the White Nile Rivers. The term "Nile" after all derives from the Latin, "Nilus," but here we refer to the story that predates of the existence of the Latin language. In any case, Genesis 2:11-12, connect the Pishon River with, "Havilah"; one only needs to turn to Genesis 10:7 to see that, "Havilah" is the direct descent of Cush. For its part, the Gihon River, as the second river in Eden, is cited in Genesis 2:13, and described as surrounding

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[13]Ibid.

> the whole land of Cush/Ethiopia. Clearly, wherever else "Eden" extended, its beginning was within the continent of Africa.[14]

The contributions of Felder raise the questions of why the imagery of individuals, the locations of rivers, and other territories become vague in their geographical locations. He also asks why Biblical maps are distorted in that Egypt and Ethiopia are shown as separate countries in a fashion which does not clearly mark them as parts of the continent of Africa. This minimizes, or almost eradicates, the African presence in the Bible. Felder is correct in his assertion that there is room for the actual presence of multi-cultures present in the Bible:

> We have no need to downplay or otherwise minimize the presence of Greeks and Romans in the Bible. They are there to be sure. But Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were neither Greek nor Roman, so any inquiring mind that seeks the truth of the matter of Hosea 4:6 and John 8:32 naturally wants to know how did the sweet little Jesus boy of Afro-Asiatic birth become whiter and whiter over the years. The answer is neither complicated nor profound. It is found in a simple matter called paint. The medieval and renaissance artists skillfully employed the painter's brush with a marvelous oil or water color and gradually the world witnessed the rebirth of Jesus, quite suitable for the portrayal of Christianity as itself a European religion. [15]

While it is not the desire of this researcher to convince or persuade individuals to acknowledge the blackness or Afrocentric roots of characters of the Bible, or to persuade others concerning the geographical locations of cities or rivers mentioned in the Bible, it is clearly evident that Felder's findings and critique of the nationality of Biblical characters

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[14]Ibid., p. 189

[15]Ibid., p. 193

are accurate. It is this African Biblical presence which influences the design of and undergirds the scriptural basis for an Afrocentric Christian curriculum.

Based on Crockett's book entitled Teaching Scriptures From an African American Perspective this researcher has concluded that tradition is very important in interpreting scripture from an Afrocentric perspective. When cultural traditions are separated out, the content of the church becomes more easily identifiable. It is this content that needs to be transmitted to future generations, free of cultural specificity. The questions Crockett raises below may be of additional help in the task of interpretation:

1. Does the interpretation invite the Biblical and African American experience to be true?
2. Does the interpretation of Scripture have power to address the needs, problems, and concerns of the African Americans?
3. Does the interpretation of Scripture make sense of the African American experience without denying the experience or destroying the humanness of the African Americans?
4. Does the interpretation help African Americans strengthen cultural identity and enhance the connectedness with the human community?[16]

It is the intention of this writer that every attempt will be given in the interpretation of Scripture to represent the Biblical and African experience in a trustworthy fashion. The Afrocentric perspective of interpreting Scripture for this model shall show that the interpretation of Scripture has the power to address the needs, the problems, and the concerns of African Americans. In the teaching of Scripture, every attempt will be given

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[16]Joseph V. Crockett. Teaching Scripture from an African American Perspective. (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1990), VIII.

to assure that the Scripture makes sense of the African American experience, without denying the experience or destroying the humanness of the African American.

Finally, the Biblical interpretation of Scriptures will be presented in a manner which will help African Americans strengthen their identity and enhance their connectedness. Through the use of an Afrocentric perspective in teaching Scripture, individuals will realize the richness of the African American heritage as it is able to visualize the charisma of its heroines and heroes. We, who are made in the image of God, whose ancestors were ripped from the continent of the African soil, who have learned through laughter and through the pain caused by the labors of injustice, who have learned to sing through the degradation of enslavement, must learn that our lives are woven together with threads of deferred dreams and realized hopes. We must learn that we are a people who have struggled to see our true purposes through to fruition in our lives. Yet, we continue with a yearning as we strive to be true to ourselves, our ancestries and our native land.

It is the further intent of this model, in using an Afrocentric perspective of Scripture, to enable persons to teach and to learn the Scriptures in order to enhance their lives with some element of African American culture. African American leaders must equip persons with the resources for making meaning and sense about their experiences. They must also encourage persons to be increasingly faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Having a Scripture taught from an Afrocentric perspective, what formula is used to enable individuals to see the Scripture in light of their cultural experiences? Joseph Crockett in his book, Teaching Scripture From an African American Perspective, offers

four "strategies of education" which "integrate the African American experience of story telling into a strategy of teaching and learning." Participants must consider who they are "as a person of God" and what they are "called to do in light of the particular history and the particular place and time" Next, Crockett mentions exile strategies which "emphasizes the Biblical call to God's people to live in harmony with all creation." Building "upon two fundamental pillars of the African American communal life, the experience of sanctuary and the tradition of worship," Crockett's goal is to help "teachers and learners identify and claim reconciliation in the ways of Christians."[17]

The researcher contends that Christian leadership training be seen as a part of the Christian education component of the local church. A further examination of a cultural embellishment of Christian education which represents the faith, traditions, and the culture ethos, patterns of relating, and ways of being in the world is necessary. As Crockett points out, the purposes and processes of Christian education articulate Christian faith, mirror the beliefs and customs of specific cultures, and reinforce and are reinforced by the structures of the culture in which they function. This reality is not inevitable, but it seems so. It does not have to be, yet it is."[18] Crockett also quotes H. Richard Niebuhr from his source, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, New York: Henry Holt & Company., 1957, pp. 3, 264-265 as saying,

> Christendom has often achieved apparent success by ignoring the precepts of its founders. The church, as an organization interested in its self

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[17]Joseph V. Crockett. Teaching Scripture from an African American Perspective, (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1990), XV.

[18]Ibid, p. 56.

> preservation and in the gain of power, has sometimes found the counsel of the cross quite as inexpedient as has the national and economic groups faced with such issues as war, slavery, and social inequality. The church has alienated itself to 'power and prestige' rather than the demands of the Gospel. Christianity has become part and parcel of the world, one social institution alongside another, a phase of total civilization more frequently conditioned by other culture's tendencies than conditioning them. [19]

Crockett is raising the point that by teaching the Christian principles from a particular cultural viewpoint that one is able to view the culture and patterns of relationship that are prevalent for that culture in relationship to the Scriptures. Crockett's quote of Niebuhr raises the issue that Christendom itself has had the opportunity to move with social groups that have felt the need for social changes because of being involved in war or being involved in slavery or social inequalities. Church hierarchies, however, have not actually taken advantage of these opportunities. Rather than taking the forefront, the church has taken a back seat position and has been more inclined to take a position of power or prestige. It has been the dominant culture in Christianity that has chosen the direction which the church would follow. As Niebuhr has stated, sometimes it has not seemed expedient for the church to view the cross in light of the issues of society.

Crockett's following assertion is right on track:

> Representing the Christian faith in the context of a specific culture is not necessarily destructive or evil, although it is limiting. It is destructive and evil when the purpose and processes of the Christian education are dominated by one culture's perspective. It is destructive and evil when one culture determines the purposes and processes for teaching and learning for every culture. Inevitably the culture that determines what will be taught,

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[19]Ibid.,p.56.

> how it will be taught, and how it will be made available to the public is the dominant culture.[20]

Likewise, it is this researcher's contention that, while the dominant culture determines the process for training, it is not necessary for the culture in power to eradicate or eliminate input of any other culture involved in the process.

This process of training from an Afrocentric perspective will move on the premise of embracing diversity in its training in that it will seek not to negate other cultures. In this Afrocentric model of ministry an attempt is made to respect the heritage of all cultures because it recognizes that every culture brings with it its own history. Intertwined with its history come its cultures and traditions. The Afrocentric perspective seeks to view all heritage as having an important place in the lives of those who would embrace the Christian faith.

A major premise of this model of ministry is found in the idea of community, community viewed from an Afrocentric perspective. The view held here is closely related to the view of Crockett which describes community as the core of the African American experience and the community is an essential focus of the Biblical witness.

Crockett goes on to discuss the teaching of scripture in the context of community.

> God acts in community. Teaching Scripture as and for the community is vital to the life of the congregation. The acts of God are announced in community. The people of God, 'the Laos', as community hears, understands, and are called to respond to God's word. The church's history is a story about communities' obedience and disobedience responses to God's activities. God's movement in the world is authenticated in community. "The AFRICAN American teachers must reestablish

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[20]Joseph V. Crockett. Teaching Scripture from an African American Perspective. (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1990), 51.

> community for learners. And learners must discover the attitudes, understandings, and skills that are needed to sustain the communities established. When the Scripture is faithfully taught, learners come to see themselves as their brother's and sister's keepers, as a part of God's world community.[21]

The convictions of the leaders, pastors, church officers, and teachers, will allow the congregation to be receptive to the teachings of the scripture from an African American perspective. As Crockett notes, leaders must show the way by doing as they say. Followers become convinced about the convictions of others when the convictions of others are constant in their actions."[22]

It is this understanding of community that is at the core of the African American experience that lifts the attitude of God in relation to humanity. It is the historical view of who I am in relationship to those around me that undergirds this model of ministry. When individuals are taught to respect each other as brothers and sisters, they learn to love one another in the light of their importance in the humanity of God.

This model of ministry further teaches the Scripture in the idea of living the Word as a way of life for community living. It also uplifts and holds the principle that the teacher must reestablish the community for learning. The role of the teacher or leaders of the church, as indicated by Crockett, must uphold the idea of being our brother's and sister's keepers as well as by being leaders who lead by example.

Here it becomes a necessity to talk about the call to leadership in light of this model of ministry for the training of leaders from an Afrocentric perspective in a new

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[21]Ibid., p.66.

[22]Ibid., p.66.

church development. While the leadership training is open to all members of this congregation, one must talk about the call to leadership from a Biblical perspective. The word, *call*, is not alien to the Christian experience. However, the word usage of call may have several connotations throughout the church community. Simon Parker in his publication, The Call to Servant Leadership in his chapter "Understanding Call" makes the following statement,

> The concept of the call has been applied to three distinct experiences; these experiences are closely linked to three persons of the Trinity: (1) God the Creator calls people into being. The word 'call' here is used in a rather loose sense, but it does not refer to an important dimension of our relationship, a dimension that we share with all humanity. (2) God the Redeemer calls people to accept God's grace. This call is manifested in the Christian community, and persons responded to this call by a commitment to the Christian community. This is what binds us with all other Christians in the ministry of all believers. (3) The Holy Spirit calls some persons to a public, representative form of service to the church. Empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit, individuals respond to that call with a life changing and lifelong commitment to service.[23]

This researcher agrees with Parker in that a distinction needs to be established between each of these understandings of the call. In particular, the distinction between the last two become crucial in this model of ministry. As a part of the church community one must feel called to the discipleship of Christ. One must feel called to follow Christ in his or her walk of life. With this understanding of call it becomes clear that all Christians are called into service and ministry within the framework of the church. Parker discusses the word "call" by breaking it down into three components.

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[23]Simon Parker. The Call to Servant Leadership (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Church, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, 1990) p. 7.

> (1) that is unique, for each call is different and unlike any other call to any other person; (2) that has a palpable element of urgency about it, for a call is a summons or an appeal that cannot be ignored; and (3) that come from a caller, God, this kind of call ultimately transcends human counsel or analysis. It need not be in opposition of other guides, pressures, or indicators of what one should do with one's life. But it has in it an element that does transcend all other indicators.[24]

The call is not only to vocation or career, but also to a particular task or role. The call to particular tasks or roles may be seen in the contemporary church as a call to special ministries. Often these roles are seen in church officers, class leaders, deacons, trustees and other church officials. Here the institution of the church differs from other institutions at the point of leadership. Secular institutions rely on positions to be filled based upon interest and skill alone. The church is foremost dependent upon the call. This call is leading or directing individuals to fulfill the various tasks and positions of leadership in the church.

These types of roles are seen as servant leaders. Parker explains the meaning of servant leaders.

> God calls people to special ministries. The Bible has many accounts of God's call to very different individuals: to Amos, to Moses, to Jeremiah, to Paul. God calls such people to become servants and leaders. But this call to become servants and leaders is not a call to two separate categories or tasks or functions. Instead, it is a call to one role, the role of servant-leader.[25]

Parker is right when he discusses the need for Christian leaders to also be servants. While servants are generally viewed as subservient, they are also responsible for the fulfillment of

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[24]Ibid., p.8.

[25]Ibid., p. 19-20.

a master's needs. A leader, on the other hand, directs these responsibilities and negotiates the dispersement of labor. Ordinarily, the term servant-leader, then, would be paradoxical. But in the realm of the Christian community, this term is appropriate.

Christ is the perfect example of a servant-leader. His relationship with the disciples is one of equality, in which he is on the same level as they are walking, talking, and eating with them. At the same time, Christ is a strong leader. Rather than use his superior knowledge of the Bible as a way of hoarding authority and power, Christ sees fit to teach his disciples and empower them through spiritual and Godly knowledge.

The humility of Christ should also teach contemporary church leaders the value of being servants to their congregation. As Parker notes in his discussion of John 13:3-5, Christ was willing to wash the feet of his disciples:

> The most striking model of this kind of service in the Bible is described in John 13:3-5. Jesus, conscious that God had entrusted everything to him, conscious that he had come from God and was going back to God, kneeled down on the floor and washed his disciples' feet. John starkly contrasts Jesus' consciousness of his supreme power and status and the menial act of washing his disciples' feet. If Jesus, the Christ to whom Almighty God has entrusted all power, can do such a thing as wash his friends' feet, to what status can the contemporary Christian rise, what amount of power can the modern Christian achieve, that would exempt him or her from the most lowly act of service.[26]

Clearly, church leaders must be willing to do all in their power to aid members of the congregation in spiritual growth. No activity must be seen as too menial or too humiliating.

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[26]Ibid., p. 21-22.

In concluding, this researcher's theology coincides with Hopkins and Cone. Hopkins and Cone present God on the side of the oppressed. This theological thought continues with the inflatability of God being all powerful. The theology of the African American has been formulated as a result of its history. This theology is framed by Afrocentric presence in biblical writings.

Chapter IV

THE MODEL OF MINISTRY

The African culture and heritage have been major contributors to the Christian faith. African Americans have had the know how to educate and train their own. Entering the doctoral program at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, and being privileged to be mentored by Gayraud Wilmore and J. T. Roberson in the area of leadership for the twenty-first century, has enabled this researcher to give clarity and creativity to this work's contentions.

As previously stated in Chapter II, African American Christian writers have not had opportunities to contribute their thoughts in this area of study. This lack of African American writing is not due to a lack of knowledge on the part of African Americans. There has been a void in the platform for such a contribution. This model was initiated in order to fill what was considered to be a void in leadership training material for African American new church starts.

A test survey was developed which was to be distributed to members at Adoration and Peace Church at the beginning of this training process. The pre-test was used to determine the following:

1. the level of awareness of African presentation
2. Biblical writing
3. the call to leadership
4. leadership experiences
5. knowledge of African American history
6. understanding of Afrocentricity
7. the principles of Kwanzaa and
8. any previous leadership training

This survey was distributed in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was included in the Sunday service bulletins. This process was begun on July 10, 1994 and continued each Sunday following, including July 31, 1994. An appeal was made to the congregation each Sunday to participate in this survey. The researcher personally extended the invitation to all of the church officials, associate ministers, and trustees to participate in the survey. The questionnaires were collected at the close of each service by the church usher, the results of which will be discussed in the following chapter.

This model of ministry incorporates the process of preaching with seminars and workshops. Each Sunday segment was used to introduce a new focus on the training model each week. Each presentation was followed with a more explanatory activity during the week. An outline of these workshops can be found in the appendix.

<u>African Heritage Workshop:</u>

On July 31, 1994, the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church held its first African Heritage Workshop. Members were encouraged to come in African attire.

Drummers and African Dancers and Interpretive Dances participated in the service. The morning message was delivered by Pastor Johannes J. Christian. The message was entitled "Our Root Formed Us." The text for the morning message was taken from Hosea 11:1, "When Isaiah was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

The purpose of the message was to present the idea of an African Biblical presence. The undergirding of Black heritage is emphasized in this message.

Outline of Message (Our Roots Formed Us)

God calls forth sons out of Africa.

The Christian experience is not new to the Black experience.

I. The great goodness of God toward God's people is real.

- A. Egypt location
- B. Inheritance of Egypt
- C. Significance to African American Christians today

II. I call my son out of Egypt

- A. God believed son
- B. These words are fulfilled in Christ's death

III. African American roots are in the Motherland

- A. Our roots formulate the Biblical story
  - 1. God in relationship with African (Egyptian)
  - 2. The Ethiopian (Black) presence in Holy scriptures?
- B. The principles noted in the Biblical story are rich in the African heritage

C. When we uphold these principles we are being nutured by the roots of our heritage.

The purpose of this message was to introduce the ideas of Afrocentricity to the congregation.

On August 6, 1994, the first training workshop was held. The workshop was informal and held at the pastor's home. To create an atmosphere which would allow the church members time for bonding, a barbecue was prepared. Events for the day included several ice-breaker activities. Participants were asked to mime the prime characters of the Bible (members drew the names from a hat). Another group activity asked members to share a childhood experience and a current experience.

Workshop I: African Biblical Presence

There was an open dialogue by group members about the Biblical characters. The presenter was the pastor. The subject matter dealt with common thoughts about Biblical characters based on the tradition of the dominant culture. Biblical characters were viewed in light of the African American Biblical scholar, Cain Hope Felder. This presentation consisted of his views on the ancient Bible land, the exclusion of the continent of Africa from most maps concerning the Bible, the Garden of Eden story, the rivers of Biblical Writing and their relationship to African presence. The workshop also discussed Felder's view of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Included in this presentation were the findings of John L. Johnson in The Black Biblical Heritage, (i.e. Pharaoh's Daughter Moses story, Ramesses II, "Sun-Born" and Simeon that was called Niger and Lucius of Cyrene.) The workshop closed with a Les Brown video entitled "Believing in One's Self.

On August 7, 1994 during the Sunday worship service at The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church, this researcher delivered a sermon entitled "The Black Christ." The purpose of the message was to allow the members to conceptualize Jesus in a tradition other than the Eurocentric image of a white, blonde, and blue-eyed figure. The morning text was taken from Revelation 1:13–16. Jesus was presented as the Son of God, Savior of all the Human Race, Redeemer, Shedding of Blood, the atonement for sin and the supreme sacrifice. The researcher maintained that Christology does not change when Jesus is viewed with hair the texture of wool and feet the color of bronze. Regardless of race, Jesus is the Holy son of God who serves as our Saviour and Redeemer.

On August 12 and 13, 1994, a training retreat was held at The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church.

Workshop II: Overview of African American Church Leaders.

The Friday evening session was entitled "African American Church Leaders." Resources for this session included Uplifting the Race and Black Ministers in the South: 1865-1902 by Dr. Edward Wheeler. This workshop allowed members to become familiar with the names and the contribution of early African American ministerial leaders. Leaders studied included Richard Allen and Morris Brown of the AME Church. We also studied the ways in which W.E.B. Dubois showed the strength of the African American church. We learned that Elijah Marrs and Daniel A. Gradalie served as leaders to the African American communities in which they lived. John B. L. Williams' sermon, "To What Extent is the Negro Pulpit Uplifting the Race" was also discussed.

Workshop III: Identifying Leadership Capabilities.

The second part of this session was lead by Twyla Williamson of Columbus, Ohio whose presentation was entitled "Fine Tuning Your Natural Leadership Abilities." The purpose of this workshop was to increase the members' knowledge of historic black leadership. Based on the attributes of successful African American leaders, workshop participants were asked to consider ways they themselves could emulate these qualities as church leaders in 1994.

Workshop IV: Afrocentricity and the Principles of Kwanzaa.

On Saturday, the second day of the retreat, the workshop was entitled "Afrocentricity and Kwanzaa." The presenter was Reverend Sheldon Williams, Pastor of The Co-Op City Baptist Church of Bronx, New York. The goal of this workshop was to allow the members to increase their knowledge of Afrocentricity and Kwanzaa, and provide time for discussion as to ways these principles and concepts could be used personally in the church. William's presentation included a definition of Afrocentricity from Molefi Kete Asante's book, Afrocentricity:

> "Afrocentricity is pro-African and consistent in its beliefs that technology belongs to the world; Afrocentricity is African genius and African values created, reconstructed, and derived from our history and experiences in our best interests."[27]

The presentations explained that Afrocentricity or at least the ideology of Afrocentricity does not raise up that which is African over that which is not. Afrocentricity, then, does not attempt to lessen the importance of the contributions of or

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[27] Molefi Kete Asante: Afrocentrity (New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc., 1988) page VIII, page 21

presence of other cultures or races. This use of the term Afrocentricity in this model does not demise or allow demisegation of any other culture or allow any other groups' contribution or presence to dominate that of another because of its size or self-imposed view of importance. Holding this view allows each groups' contribution to be esteemed with equal importance.

This workshop also discussed the seven principles of Nguzo Saba which are often referred to as Kwanzaa. "Kwanzaa was founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, a Black studies professor who describes himself as a cultural nationalist. Kwanzaa originated as a cultural idea and an expression of the Nationalist US Organization which was headed by Dr. Karenga."[28] The handouts for this session may be found in the appendix of this model of ministry.

On August 14, 1994, Rev. Williams was the quest preacher at The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church. His message was entitled "Imani" (Faith), based on the parable of mustard seed faith. The message discussed how the principles of Kwanzaa can be implemented in daily life and enhance leadership qualities in the church.

In Pastor Williams' message, "Imani" (Faith) was described as a term which is inclusive of faith in God. The preacher's use of the scripture and this Kwanzaa principle shows how Afrocentric principles can be viewed within the framework of Christianity. By validating the principles of Kwanzaa, one needs not take an anti-Christian stance. Rather, one can exercise the principles of Kwanzaa and lead a God fearing life at the same time.

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[28] Cedric McCleser: Kwanzaa, (New York: Gumbs & Thomas, Publishers 1993), page 1

More specifically, Williams explained that Christian leaders must exhibit the Imani principle in order to be effective leaders in an Afrocentric new church start.

Workshop V: Afrocentric Spiritual Leadership.

The last workshop in this Afrocentric leadership model was held on August 20, 1994. This workshop, entitled "The Effects of Spiritual Leadership in the Church from an Afrocentric Prospective," attempted to define Afrocentric spiritual leadership, presenting African American leaders who both possessed these qualities and had effective ministries. Among those presenters were Bishop Paul Morton, presiding bishop of the Full Gospel Baptist Fellowship and Elder Charles Harrison Mason, the founder of Church of God in Christ, one of the largest black Pentecostal movements.

The scriptural presentation of who the Holy Spirit is was made an African American experience using John 14:26; Comforter Receiving John 20:22; Act 2:4 filled spiritual leader, persons of prayer, Dedication to the service of God, and unity according to the principles in the word of God. This sermon text was taken from Acts 2:4:

> And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance.

Just as the Holy Spirit manifests itself through an emotional response, Africans have traditionally exhibited such charisma. Thus, the morning message established an Africans presence in the Pentecost experience through the rather affective manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

At the conclusion of these workshops, participants seemed more confident in their understanding of not only an African presence in the Bible, but also their role as African American Christians and church leaders.

A post-test questionnaire for this training model was given to the participants following the service on August 21, 1994. These post-test results are included in the appendix.

Chapter V

RESULTS OF MODEL

As previously stated in the introduction, the purpose of this model of ministry is to develop a model of ministry that would identify prospective leaders for the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio. This researcher intended to investigate the plausibility and accuracy of three hypotheses related to the leadership training of members of a new church development project in the African American community, to develop a curriculum to provide leadership training from an Afrocentric perspective, and to provide biblical and theological studies from an Afrocentric perspective.

The following research hypotheses served as guides upon which to focus this study:

Hypothesis 1: Newly developed African American churches have gifts, graces, talents, and qualities for leadership which are unknown.

Hypothesis 2: Seldom does new church development begin with an Afrocentric based curriculum. Such a curriculum is necessary to accommodate the goals of establishing congregations grounded in an Afrocentric perspective.

Hypothesis 3: In view of the previous presuppositions, it is necessary to conduct a series of workshops and other learning opportunities that will introduce the congregation to biblical and theological studies from an Afrocentric perspective.

This initial phase of the project concerned itself with surveying the members and associates of The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain a clear understanding of what type of leadership training was needed. Those specifically surveyed were all persons aged 14 and older present during Sunday morning worship services in the month of June, 1994. Yielding 35 responses, the survey also included people who are a part of the Outreach Ministries of The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church, A.I.D.S. Support Groups, and The Point of Decision Domestic Violence Shelter. In particular, all persons holding offices and teaching positions were encouraged to participate.

Research Hypothesis 1: Newly developed African American churches have leadership qualities which are unknown. From the test sample, the survey showed that 92% of the survey participants would greatly benefit from an Afrocentric leadership training model of ministry.

> When the infiltration by young men and women, conscientious cadres, takes place, then these and other churches will painfully come into

> the forefront of religious leadership. They will be the innovators, the politically aware partners to Afrocentricity.
>
> The church as a whole has vacillated on too many issues, wagged its tail too eagerly for the wrong reasons, and lost the trust and confidence of many youthful supporters.
>
> They will only return when they are given the choice of a relevant ideology. Deliberate and willful attempts must be made to change these organizations into Afrocentric units. In the next few years, this conscientious cadre will go to church.
>
> They will make of the black church what the Ukrainians made of their churches, what the Armenians made of theirs, and what the Jews have made of their synagogues; places where children receive cultural and historical training.[29]

The above assertions by Asante are consistent with the findings of this researcher. African American church members surveyed in this church said that they are looking for the church to lead in the development of Afrocentric leadership. The development of such a leadership training model will equip the congregants with tools indigenous to their culture and allow them to be more effective in demonstrating their leadership abilities.

Research Hypothese 2: Seldom does new church development begin with an Afrocentric based curriculum. The people's responses in the survey validate Hypothesis 2. There is a limited Afrocentric based curriculum of leadership training in African American churches. The survey shows that only one individual had ever received training that was considered to be Afrocentric based. This would mean that 99% of the people surveyed have never received such training.

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[29]Molefi, Kete Asante. Afrocentricity. (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc. 1988), p. 73.

Research Hypothesis 3: Newly formed African American churches have no mechanism to provide Afrocentric based biblical and theological studies for their members. The findings of the survey show that 80% of those surveyed expressed limited learning experiences of Afrocentric biblical and theological studies. This statistical data suggests that there may be a need to create a model of ministry that will enable newly formed African American churches to educate its members from an Afrocentric biblical and theological basis.

It is evident that the findings of the researcher reveal that the congregation of The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church was deficient in their knowledge of these areas. This in no way, however, implies a lack of intellectual abilities. While this survey does not attempt to cast any reflection regarding the spirituality of those participating, it is the researcher's contention that there are needs regarding the development and recognition of leadership, the availability of an Afrocentric curriculum for leadership training, and the need for biblical and theological presentations from an Afrocentric perspective.

In regard to hypothesis 1, the post test results show that the training participants were able to identify their leadership abilities and qualities. This writer believes the utilization of these qualities are a direct result of participating in the leadership training. This leadership training model allowed the pastor and congregation to become more acutely aware of each other's attributes and leadership capabilities. The second training workshop was designed to take a historical look at leaders and their qualities. This workshop also allowed time for individuals to focus on their own leadership qualities.

In regard to hypothesis 2, the study which was done prior to the implementation of the model shows little evidence of many African American new church developments starting with an African American based curriculum. The training model's pretest provided evidence that the congregation's Afrocentric awareness was limited. The post test indicates that there was a significant increase in the level of awareness of the need for such a curriculum. The survey showed a willingness to use such a curriculum.

Hypothesis 3 is also plausible. In view of the previous presuppositions, it is necessary to conduct a series of workshops and other learning opportunities that will introduce the congregation to biblical and theological studies from an Afrocentric perspective.

This model of ministry used workshops, retreats, and sermons as ways of introducing the congregation to biblical and theological studies from an Afrocentric perspective. Using the information gathered from the pretest and post-test, the evidence leads to the conclusion that the use of workshops, retreats, and sermons enabled the congregation to raise its level of awareness in these areas.

This chapter also contains copies of the questionnaire. The tabulation of percentage is given for each question in both surveys and is also included in this document. The results of the pretest and post test questionnaire may be found in the appendix.

Data Interpretation

There are three categories of questions in the tests: leadership, Afrocentric biblical knowledge, and historical knowledge. The pretest scores indicated that training was

needed in all categories. The following information presents the results of the survey by category:

Leadership:

In the pretest, 97% of those surveyed indicated a lack of ability in developing curriculum for leadership needs. A total of 100% of those surveyed felt that their knowledge of African American leadership training was extremely low. 88% reported that they lacked a clear understanding of the meaning of spiritual leadership qualities in African American churches and 85% did not consider their understanding of the call to leadership to be considerable.

These percentages indicate a need for leadership training that would provide the participants with an understanding of Afrocentric leadership. As a result, this model of ministry was designed to define Afrocentric leadership through positive qualities based on the seven principles of Nguzo Saba. This model also attempts to clarify the call to leadership for participants.

As the post-test results show, after the workshops 97% of participants considered their knowledge in the area of African American leadership to be considerable, and were more confident in their ability to develop curriculum for their leadership needs. Clearly, the workshops were effective in their goal to train leaders who are both confident and skilled.

Afrocentric Biblical Knowledge:

In the pretest, 66% of participants considered their basic knowledge of an African presence in the Bible to be lacking and 77% considered their ability in applying scripture

to principles of Kwanzaa to be significantly low. 54%, a little more than half of the participants, reported their Biblical teaching abilities to be low as well.

These percentages indicated the need for increased training in the scriptures. Survey participants lacked knowledge about Biblical characters of African descent. They also needed to be trained to incorporate the principles of Kwanzaa into the scripture. As a result, this model implemented a training curriculum which as a Black theological foundation which was presented in both a Sunday sermon and a workshop presentation. In fact, a three day retreat was developed to allow ample time for training in African presence in the Bible.

The post-test results show an increased knowledge in these areas. 100% of participants claim to have considerable knowledge of an African presence in the Bible. 94% report a considerable ability in applying scripture to principles of Kwanzaa. Apparently, the training workshops were successful.

Historical Knowledge:

In the pretest, the collected data in the historical category showed that 90% of participants were lacking in knowledge regarding African American church leaders and the history of the Black/African American church. As a result, workshops were developed in this ministry model to cover material on African American churches and church leaders from 1800-1953.

The post-test shows immense improvements in this area. 96% of participants claimed to have a newly gained and considerable knowledge of African American church leaders from l800-l953. 100% of participants claimed considerable knowledge regarding

the history of Black/African American churches. Clearly, the model was effective in its goal to train and educate African American church leaders in an Afrocentric Christian curriculum. 91% of participants concluded that their overall knowledge of this leadership training program was considerable. Furthermore, 94% of participants rated themselves in the highest ranks in terms their personal sense of themselves as Afrocentric.

PRETEST DATA COLLECTION

	Lack of Knowledge/Ability	Considerable Knowledge/Ability
1. Concerning developing curriculum for leadership needs, my abilities are:	1(20%) 2(77%) 3 4 5	
2. My knowledge in the area of African American Leadership Training is:	1(63%) 2(37%) 3 4 5	
3. In the area of problem solving and planning, my knowledge/ability is:	1(14%) 2(29%) 3(51%) 4(6%) 5	
4. My knowledge/ability regarding needs assessment for leadership training is:	1(31%) 2 (43%) 3(23%) 4(3%)5	
5. What would rate your basic knowledge of African presence in the Bible to be:	1(6%) 2 (60%) 3 (34%) 4 5	
6. I consider my ability in applying scripture to principles of Kwanzaa as:	1 (77%) 2 (11%) 3 (11%) 4 5	
7. I consider my Biblical teaching abilities to be:	1(20%) 2 (34%) 3(37%) 4(9%)5	
8. I consider my ability in training others to be leaders:	1(14%) 2(74%) 3(9%) 4(3%) 5	
9. I consider my ability to work on projects with others to be:	1(3%) 2 (11%) 3(31%) 4(25%) 5(29%)	
10. I consider my capacity for setting and achieving goals to be:	1 2 3(11%) 4(29%) 5(60%)	

	Lack of Knowledge/Ability				Considerable Knowledge/Ability
11. I would consider my knowledge of African American church leader of 1800-1953 to be:	1(77%)	2 (17%)	3 (3%)	4(3%)	5

Topical Areas:

12. How would you rate your understanding of the call to leadership?	1 (54%)	2 (31%)	3 (6%)	4 (9%)	5
13. Same question regarding "Black Theology"?	1(40%)	2 (51%)	3 (6%)	4 (3%)	5
14. Rate yourself regarding your knowledge of the term "Afrocentric".	1 (11%)	2 (37%)	3 (46%)	4(6%)	5
15. What would you rate your knowledge regarding "The History of the Black/African American Church" to be?	1 (9%)	2 (14%)	3(74%)	4 (3%)	5
16. Regarding the "Black/African American Church's" meaning of spiritual leadership qualities?	1(31%)	2 (48%)	3 (9%)	4(11%)	5

Conclusion:

17. Based on all of the prior questions regarding focus and subject matter, how would you rate your "overall knowledge" of this leadership training program?	1	2	3 (6%)	4 (9%)	5(86%)
18. How would you rate your personal feelings regarding going forward with this effort?	1	2	3 (3%)	4 (14%)	5 (83%

POST TEST

	Lack of Knowledge/Ability				Considerable Knowledge/Ability
1. Concerning developing curriculum for leadership needs, my abilities are:	1	2	3 (3%)	4(20%)	5(77%)
2. My knowledge in the area of African American Leadership Training is:	1	2	3(3%)	4(17%)	5(80%)
3. In the area of problem solving and planning, my knowledge/ability is:	1	2	3	4(14%)	5(86%)
4. My knowledge/ability regarding needs assessment for leadership training is:	1	2	3(3%)	4 (3%)	5(94%)
5. What would rate your basic knowledge of African presence in the Bible to be:	1	2	3	4 (9%)	5 (91%)
6. I consider my ability in applying scripture to principles of Kwanzaa as:	1	2	3(6%)	4	5(94%)
7. I consider my Biblical teaching abilities to be:	1	2	3(3%)	4 (6%)	5(91%)
8. I consider my ability in training others to be leaders:	1	2	3	4 (11%)	5 (89%)
9. I consider my ability to work on projects with others to be:	1	2	3	4 (3%)	5(97%)
10. I consider my capacity for setting and achieving goals to be:	1	2	3	4 (6%)	5(94%)
11. I would consider my knowledge of African American church leader of 1800-1953 to be:	1	2	3 (3%)	4(9%)	5(87%)

	Lack of Knowledge/Ability				Considerable Knowledge/Ability
Topical Areas:					
12. How would you rate your understanding of the call to leadership?	1	2	3	4(3%)	5(97%)
13. Same question regarding "Black Theology"?	1	2	3 (3%)	4(6%)	5(91%)
14. Rate yourself regarding your knowledge of the term "Afrocentric".	1	2	3	4(3%)	5(97%)
15. What would you rate your knowledge regarding "The History of the Black/African American Church" to be?	1	2	3	4(11%)	5(89%)
16. Regarding the "Black/African American Church's" meaning of spiritual leadership qualities?	1	2	3(3%)	4(3%)	5(94%)
Conclusion:					
17. Based on all of the prior questions regarding focus and subject matter, how would you rate your "overall knowledge" of this leadership training program?	1	2	3(6%)	4 (3%)	5(91%
18. How would you rate your personal feelings regarding going forward with this effort?		1	2	3	4 5

Chapter VI

REFLECTION/CONCLUSION

In this chapter this researcher wants to share reflections about the experience of dealing with this model of ministry. This chapter will include thoughts about its effectiveness and discuss the replicability of this model.

The results of the first post test really pleased this author. The supportive data proved that this model positively impacted the lives of The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church members. The congregation's needs assessment revealed areas of need that could be met through this training model. While this leadership training was beneficial for some participants, its scope remains too limited. This model of ministry would like to see such leadership training implemented with a more established African American congregation. Perhaps members of such congregations could benefit from being exposed to this Afrocentric approach as well.

More time is needed to do this type of training. A longer period of time could allow for the materials to be presented in a more thorough fashion. The effectiveness of this model of ministry could have been enhanced if the congregation was more informed as to the nature of the content and subject matter of the training material. In addition, had the congregation been more thoroughly introduced to the curriculum, the initial number of participants responding might have been greater.

The overall effectiveness of this model of ministry, however, is positive because every participant gained knowledge in the process. The participants of The Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church leadership training firmly grasp the scholastic writings of Cain Hope Felder. They are now able to distinguish the incongruities in the historical interpretation of biblical writings where Afrocentric presence has been negated or voided. They have learned that Ethiopian and Egyptian presence are actually African presences in biblical writings. They have learned that many significant kings, queens, and warriors such as Uzziah, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Josiah, and Candace all represent God in relation to the African presence in the Bible. The model is effective in that it accomplished what it was designed to do: train participants as leaders. Participants have been trained by taking the seven principles of Kwanzaa and incorporating them with the Holy Scriptures to develop a leadership quality for daily use in their personal lives and in the life of the church. For example, *Umoja*, which means unity, has been taught as a leadership quality which all leaders must strive for in working with God's people in the church community. In this model of ministry, *Kujichagulia*, which means self-determination, has been presented as a leadership quality which may be supported by the holy scriptures and I Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable all ways abounding in the works of the Lord...." This Pauline scripture commands the individual to strive in their labors for the Lord. This model of ministry teaches that it is the quality of self-determination, *Kujichagulia*, which enables the Christian to be stedfast and unmovable.

This model of ministry may be useful to other newly formed African American congregations in need of Afrocentric leadership training. However, it is advisable that any use of this model be entered into only after prayer. Careful consideration must be given because of the types of changes that this model may bring to a congregation. One must examine their context of ministry to see if this model would be advisable. In a church whose congregation is resistant to incorporating an Afrocentric cultural approach, for example, the changes evoked by this model might seem overwhelming. In such a situation, a pastor might need to introduce these changes slowly, perhaps preparing the congregation by first instituting an Afrocentric Sunday once a month where church leaders might wear African garb or sing African choruses.

The new church pastor should select a small committee to carefully review the content of this model of ministry. This committee should then develop a time line which will fit the church calendar, allowing for the model to be implemented without a break. At this point, the committee should make any alterations necessary to make it most effective in its context. Alteration may be necessary in the following areas: survey, selection of presenters, availability of training videos to be used to meet the needs of its congregation.

Those using this model should be concerned with the possibility of a potential negative reaction from the membership. The researcher strongly suggests that every precaution be taken to ensure the inclusion of the entire membership during the implementation of this model. If not, the church runs the risk of alienating some of its members and breaking the bonds of unity.

It would truly be an understatement to say that the experience of developing this model of ministry has been a learning experience. The researcher has felt pulled and tugged at every bend and junction of this journey. Perhaps one of the most valued lessons in this learning experience is that a greater understanding of Afrocentricity and a clearer sense of the principles of Nguzo Saba have been achieved. The researcher learned that it is possible to develop a model of ministry which could possibly reach far beyond the limited scope of his ministry. Finally, this experience has enabled this researcher to ascertain a greater understanding of the African presence and contribution in the realm of biblical understanding.

This process has allowed this researcher to be more constructive in self-evaluation. The process has taught this researcher how to receive constructive criticism from others. This researcher now has a better understanding of the value of having laity and associate ministers who are able to use their leadership qualities. When laity and associate ministers apply their leadership qualities, it a broader base for church ministries is available.

Having learned that members of this congregation are very open to a more Afrocentric based leadership, the Adoration and Peace Missionary Baptist Church will endeavor to further create more curriculum of this nature. This model of ministry has allowed this researcher's understanding of theology to become more Afrocentric. This experience in working with others in the ministry has presented this researcher with the opportunity to benefit from their experiences.

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

	Lack of Knowledge/Ability				Considerable Knowledge/Ability
1. Concerning developing curriculum for leadership needs, my abilities are:	1	2	3	4	5
2. My knowledge in the area of African American Leadership Training is:	1	2	3	4	5
3. In the area of problem solving and planning, my knowledge/ability is:	1	2	3	4	5
4. My knowledge/ability regarding needs assessment for leadership training is:	1	2	3	4	5
5. What would rate your basic knowledge of African presence in the Bible to be:	1	2	3	4	5
6. I consider my ability in applying scripture to principles of Kwanzaa as:	1	2	3	4	5
7. I consider my Biblical teaching abilities to be:	1	2	3	4	5
8. I consider my ability in training others to be leaders:	1	2	3	4	5
9. I consider my ability to work on projects with others to be:	1	2	3	4	5
10. I consider my capacity for setting and achieving goals to be:	1	2	3	4	5
11. I would consider my knowledge of African American church leader of 1800-1953 to be:	1	2	3	4	5

Topical Areas:

12. How would you rate your understanding of the call to leadership?	1	2	3	4	5
13. Same question regarding "Black Theology"?	1	2	3	4	5

	Lack of Knowledge/Ability				Considerable Knowledge/Ability
14. Rate yourself regarding your knowledge of the term "Afrocentric".	1	2	3	4	5
15. What would you rate your knowledge regarding "The History of the Black/African American Church" to be?	1	2	3	4	5
16. Regarding the "Black/African American Church's" meaning of spiritual leadership qualities?	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5

Conclusion:

17. Based on all of the prior questions regarding focus and subject matter, how would you rate your "overall knowledge" of this leadership training program?	1	2	3	4	5
18. How would you rate your personal feelings regarding going forward with this effort?	1	2	3	4	5

GRAPH KEY

The following pages are graphs of the pre and post test results.

Each of these colors represents one the five choices per question.

The number of people who chose # 1 is represented by the color purple

The number of people who chose # 2 is represented by the color black

The number of people who chose # 3 is represented by the color red

The number of people who chose # 4 is represented by the color green

The number of people who chose $ 5 is represented by the color blue

The numbers 1 through 18 in the left margin from the top to bottom of the page represents each of the questions on the questionnaire.

The number in increments of 5 (0 - 35) across the page from left to right represents the number chosen by the participant in answering the questionnaire. Thirty-five would be the total number of participants responding.

APPENDIX

MODEL AFROCENTRIC WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Opening Session: African Heritage Worship Service

Goal: To introduce African clothing, music, and culture to congregation.

Desired outcome: Congregation will became more comfortable with their African Heritage.

Workshop I: African Biblical Presence

Goal: To increase participants' knowledge of an African presence in the Bible

Desired outcome: Participants able to conceptualize their heritage in the scriptures.

Workshop II: Overview of African American Church Leaders

Goal: To increase participants' knowledge of African American Christian leadership

Desired outcome: Participants able to place themselves, as African American church leaders the context of those who have preceded them in ministry.

Workshop III: Identifying Leadership Capabilities

Goal: To enable participants to identify their capacity for leadership

Desired outcome: Participants confident enough to tap into their strong personal qualities in order to better serve their church.

Workshop IV: Afrocentricity and the Principles of Kwanzaa.

Goal: To increase participant's knowledge of the principles of Kwanzaa regarding Afrocentric leadership.

Desired outcome: Participants able to apply the principles of Kwanzaa in both their daily lives and their church leadership.

Workshop V: Afrocentric Spiritual Leadership

Goal: To enable participants to see the manifestation of the Holy Spirit as an African experience.

Desired outcome: Participants able to see the compatibility of their own African emotionalism and that created by the Holy Spirit.